

Message Text

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11

ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 AID-20 AGR-20 EUR-25 SPC-03 EB-11

NSC-07 RSC-01 CIEP-02 TRSE-00 SS-20 STR-08 OMB-01

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R 281600Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY FREETOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9381

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LIMITED OFFICIAL SECTION ONE OF TWO FREETOWN 0562

PARIS FOR UNESCO

ROME FOR FODAG

VIENNA FOR IAEA AND UNIDO

MONTREAL FOR ICAO

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TAGS: EAID, ECRP, UNDP

SUBJECT: CERP 0008 - EVALUATION OF UN ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

REF FREETOWN 480 OF MARCH 28, 1973

STATE 042239

1. SUMMARY. IMPLEMENTATIVE ACTION HAS BEEN TAKEN ON ONLY TWO OF THE 15 NEW PROJECTS IDENTIFIED IN LAST YEAR'S UNDP COUNTRY PLAN. THE SLOW PACE, CAUSED LARGELY BY LACK OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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COORDINATION AND COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE UNDP AND THE

GOSL, IS NOT ENTIRELY LAMENTABLE. THE UNDP PROGRAM COULD BE SUBSTANTIALLY IMPROVED IF FUNDS EARMARKED FOR THE MISHMASH OF UNRELATED, LOW PRIORITY PROJECTS COULD BE CONSOLIDATED

BEHIND A COHESIVE PROGRAM IN SIERRA LEONE'S MOST CRITICAL DEVELOPMENTAL SECTOR - AGRICULTURE.

2. LAST YEAR'S COUNTRY PROGRAM WAS APPROVED IN JUNE AND THE FIRST ANNUAL COUNTRY PROGRAM REVIEW IS SCHEDULED FOR THIS JUNE. TRI-PARTITE REVIEWS OF INDIVIDUAL PROJECTS CONDUCTED SINCE THE FIRST OF THE YEAR HAVE BROUGHT OUT THE NEED FOR A MUCH FULLER COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE UNDP AND THE GOSL OF THEIR RESPECTIVE INTENTIONS, ASPIRATIONS, AND PROBLEMS. THE TRI-PARTITE REVIEW OF UNDP'S PLANNING UNIT PROJECT PARTICULARLY UNDERSCORED THE LACK OF ADEQUATE POLITICAL GUIDANCE FROM THE GOSL IN THE FORMULATION OF THE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN. END SUMMARY.

(A) ROLE OF UNDP IN UN DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM.

3. THE UNDP PLANNING UNIT PROJECT WAS EARLIER ENVISIONED AS A MEANS OF ESTABLISHING RATIONAL DEVELOPMENTAL PRIORITIES DESIGNED TO BEST ACHIEVE THE GOALS CHOSEN BY THE GOSL POLITICAL LEADERSHIP. AN ECONOMICALLY AND POLITICALLY SOUND PLAN WOULD HELP THE UNDP GUIDE THE EFFORTS OF INDIVIDUAL MINISTRIES AND COORDINATE THE ASSISTANCE OF VARIOUS EXTERNAL DONORS. WHILE THE RAPID RISE IN OIL PRICES HAS HINDERED THE TECHNICAL FORMULATION OF THE PLAN, A MORE SERIOUS PROBLEM HAS BEEN THE VIRTUAL ABSENCE OF ANY POLITICAL DIRECTION IN THE FORMULATION OF THE PLAN. SINCE ITS ESTABLISHMENT, THE CABINET LEVEL NATIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL (NPC) HEADED BY PRESIDENT STEVENS HAS NOT ONCE MET TO OFFER GUIDANCE. THE PLANNERS ARE UNCOMFORTABLY AWARE THAT THEIR PLAN HAS BEEN DRAWN UP IN A POLITICAL VACUUM. UNDP OFFICIALS HOPE THAT THE NPC WILL MEET IN APRIL TO CONSIDER A DRAFT OF THE PLAN BUT AT THIS LATE STAGE IN THE PROCESS THE NPC CAN DO LITTLE MORE THAN CONDUCT A CURSORY REVIEW OF THE FINISHED PRODUCT.

4. THE UNDP HAS BEEN UNABLE TO ELICIT COUNTERPART LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PERSONNEL, SUGGESTIONS, IDEAS, OR EVEN A CLEAR STATEMENT OF WHAT THE GOSL WANTS. WHILE THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION HAS BEEN RESPONSIVE, COOPERATION AND SUPPORT HAS BEEN MINIMAL FROM THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES AND PRACTICALLY NONEXISTANT FROM THE MINISTRY OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY. FOR THEIR PART, GOSL MINISTERS SOMETIMES PROFESS TO BE ENTIRELY UNINFORMED AND UNAWARE OF THE ACTIVITIES OF UNDP EXPERTS ASSIGNED TO THEIR MINISTRIES.

5. THE COORDINATION OF UN ASSISTANCE WILL NOT IMPROVE GREATLY UNTIL MARGINAL PROJECTS FROM LAST YEAR'S "SHOPPING LIST" ARE COMPLETED OR ELIMINATED TO MAKE ROOM FOR A MORE COHERENT PROGRAM. ENCOURAGEMENT CAN, HOWEVER, BE DRAWN FROM THE FACT THAT A REVIEW TEAM FROM UNDP HEADQUARTERS HAS RECTIFIED LONGSTANDING DIFFICULTIES IN THE JOINT UNDP/IDA VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAM. THE IDA INTEGRATED AGRICULTURAL PROJECT, WHICH HAS DRAWN ON UNDP'S PREVIOUS STUDY OF INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT OF THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR, HAS ESTABLISHED A SUCCESSFUL CREDIT AND EXTENSION SCHEME THAT IS GENERATING HOPE OF SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS IN THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR.

(B) COORDINATION OF ALL EXTERNAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.

6. INFORMAL CONSULTATION AMONG WESTERN DONORS AND THE UNDP HAS EVOLVED TO AVOID UNCOORDINATED RESPONSES TO "SHOTGUN" APPEALS FROM THE GOSL. THE RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE CHAIRS QUARTERLY MEETING AT WHICH DONORS MAY DISCUSS THEIR PLANS AND EXPLORE POSSIBILITIES OF COOPERATION. THE IMPORTANCE OF THESE MEETINGS AS A COORDINATING DEVICE IS DIMINISHED BY THE NON-PARTICIPATION OF ALL COMMUNIST DONORS. THE GOSL HAS NOT PRESSED FOR GREATER COORDINATION OF ASSISTANCE.

(C) COUNTRY PROGRAM REVIEW.

7. THE EMBASSY WILL COMMENT ON THE COUNTRY PROGRAM REVIEW, WHICH IS SCHEDULED FOR JUNE, UPON ITS COMPLETION.

(D) APPRAISAL OF PROPOSED PROJECTS.

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8. THE EMBASSY MAINTAINS LIAISON WITH UNDP AND HAS OFFERED COMMENTS, EXPERTISE, AND RESOURCES TO NEW PROJECTS. IN CONNECTION WITH UNDP'S PROGRAM TO UPGRADE FACILITIES AT ROKUPR RICE RESEARCH STATION, THE EMBASSY SECURED THE CONSULTATIVE SERVICES OF A USAID AGRICULTURAL PROJECT MANAGER AND APPROVED THE USE OF 170,000 LEONES (\$187,000) OF PL 480 TITLE I FUNDS FOR USE ON THIS PROJECT. TITLE I FUNDS CONTINUE TO BE USED TO FINANCE LOCAL COSTS OF THE UNDP PLANNING UNIT. THE EMBASSY HAS OFFERED TO FACILITATE TRAINING OF A SIERRA LEONEAN IN INTERPRETATION OF ERTS PHOTOGRAPHY SO THAT THIS VALUABLE INFORMATION SOURCE CAN BE UTILIZED IN THE UNDP SOIL AND LAND USE SURVEY. EMBASSY SELF HELP FUNDS HAVE BEEN MADE AVAILABLE TO THE PLANNING/ MAPPING UNIT THAT WILL ANALYSE AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY TO DISCOVER

LAND USE PATTERNS. THE EMBASSY WAS ABLE TO DRAW ON ITS
ACCUMULATED EXPERIENCE IN FUNDING RURAL SCHOOL BUILDING
PROJECTS TO SUGGEST METHODS OF ENLISTING LOCAL INITIATIVE
FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF PILOT PRIMARY SCHOOLS FOR A UNDP/UNESCO
PROJECT IN RURAL EDUCATION.
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